

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently amended): A method of evaluating compounds which are effective for treatment or prevention of obesity comprising:

i) (a) a step in which a test compound is contacted with a long chain fatty acyl elongase (LCE) LCE protein in an admixture comprising a cell-extracted microsome fraction, NADPH, palmitoyl CoA, and labeled malonyl-CoA and

ii) (b) a step in which it is confirmed whether or not said test compound ~~exhibits an effect on~~ inhibits the elongase activity of said LCE protein.

Claims 2-21 (Cancelled)

Claim 22 (Currently amended): ~~The method of Claim 1 wherein the effect is an inhibition of LCE activity~~ The method of Claim 1 wherein at least 20 % of the LCE activity is confirmed as being inhibited.

Claim 23 (Currently amended): A method of evaluating compounds which are effective for treatment or prevention of obesity comprising:

i) (a) a step in which ~~a test compound is~~ test compounds are contacted with a plurality of elongase proteins including a long chain fatty acyl elongase (LCE) LCE in an admixture comprising a cell-extracted microsome fraction, NADPH, palmitoyl CoA, and labeled malonyl-CoA,

ii) (b) a step in which the activities of said plurality of elongase proteins are assayed, and

iii) (c) a step in which test compounds ~~are selected~~ which inhibit the LCE activity among said plurality of elongase proteins are selected as being effective for the treatment or prevention of obesity.

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Claim 24 (Currently amended): ~~The method of Claim 23 wherein the effect is an inhibition of LEC activity~~ The method of Claim 23 wherein the test compounds which inhibit at least 20 % of the activity of LCE activity are selected.